Notice of Preparation and Scoping Meeting
Laguna Beach Downtown Specific Plan Phase II Update Project

Date: January 27, 2026

To: Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation, State Responsible Agencies, State Trustee Agencies, Other Public Agencies, Orange County Clerk, and other Interested Parties

Subject: **Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report and Notice of a Public Scoping Meeting for the Laguna Beach Downtown Specific Plan Phase II Update Project**

Location: Generally located along Laguna Canyon Road to Main Beach, west of the vicinity of Cliff Drive, east along Coast Highway, and within Downtown, in the area of Forest and Ocean Avenues. The project site is situated within a 115-acre area; refer to Exhibit 1.1, *Regional Vicinity*, and Exhibit 1.2, *Site Vicinity*.

Applicant: City of Laguna Beach
505 Forest Avenue,
Laguna Beach, CA 92651

Project Contact: City of Laguna Beach
Kate Kazama, Associate Planner
Community Development Department
505 Forest Avenue
Laguna Beach, CA 92651
Email: kkazama@lagunabeachcity.net
Office: (949) 497-0748

Notice is hereby given that the City of Laguna Beach (City) will be the Lead Agency and will prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Laguna Beach Downtown Specific Plan Phase II Project (project)[1].

Project Location and Setting

The City of Laguna Beach is located in the southern portion of Orange County, California, midway between the counties of San Diego and Los Angeles; refer to

[1] Since the City has determined that an EIR is required for the project, pursuant to Section 15060(d) of the CEQA Guidelines, preparation of an Initial Study is not required and, therefore, one has not been prepared.

Exhibit 1.1, Regional Vicinity. The Laguna Beach DSP encompasses approximately 115 acres, extending along Laguna Canyon Road to Main Beach, westerly in the vicinity of Cliff Drive, east along Coast Highway, and into the heart of Downtown in the area of Forest and Ocean Avenues; refer to **Exhibit 1.2, Site Vicinity**. The DSP area is generally framed by the Laguna Canyon Frontage Road, the Pacific Ocean, Legion Street and Cliff Drive. The DSP also includes the area referred to as "Central Bluffs", situated on the south side of South Coast Highway, between Laguna Avenue and Sleepy Hollow Lane. Additionally, the Plan encompasses the primary entrance to the Village from Laguna Canyon Road, an area that contains many of the civic and art institutions within the community.

The DSP area features a broad range of commercial uses, including retail shops, resident services, offices, and restaurants. Refer to **Exhibit 1.3, Land Use Districts**. Residential uses are located primarily along Lower Cliff Drive and other residential properties are dispersed throughout the Downtown. Downtown Laguna Beach is recognized as the historical center of the City's business, civic, cultural and other public activities, and represents much of the identity and heritage of the city. The Downtown is one of the earliest areas to be developed and is typified by small lot development patterns, with varied building heights and architectural styles.

The Downtown housing stock is limited due to the commercial focus of the area and is predominantly occupied by one-person households. Most of the housing is located along Lower Cliff Drive, but there are residential buildings on South Coast Highway, Glenneyre Street, Mermaid Street, and Laguna Canyon Road. A few mixed use residential and commercial structures are also scattered throughout the Downtown. Given the commercial focus of the area, the existing housing stock is primarily limited to multifamily rental units. A majority of the single-family dwellings are older structures that add to the overall character of the area. Some of these buildings may be considered for placement on the City's Historic Register and may be eligible for preservation incentives.

Early subdivision activity in the community took place primarily between 1887 and 1925. The lot configuration found today in the Downtown is largely the result of those early subdivisions. Within the DSP area, there are nearly 500 lots held by about half as many property owners. Many of these lots are quite small, some measuring approximately 25 feet by 90 feet or less, and are in fragmented ownership, which characterizes much of the privately held property in the Downtown. In contrast, publicly held property includes some very large parcels such as the Festival of the Arts Grounds/Irvine Bowl and Main Beach Park. Other properties held under public ownership are dispersed throughout the Downtown and include the Glenneyre Street parking structure, several surface parking lots, Jahraus Park, Brown's Park, the Laguna Playhouse, the Orange County Public Library, the transit center, the Village Entrance site, City Hall (Main, North and West buildings), the Lumberyard parking lot, the Laguna Beach Community and Susi Q Center, the affordable housing development Alice Court, and the Laguna Beach County Water District facilities.

Downtown Laguna Beach has a unique eclectic character created by a series of architecturally varied buildings that are predominantly one- and two-story in height but some extend to three- and four- stories in places. The low building height in Downtown helps to preserve views of the ocean from higher vantage points and the streets create view corridors to the ocean and surrounding hills.

Background and History

In 1989, the City adopted the DSP after several years of work by a Citizen's Advisory Committee to identify significant planning issues and develop a policy base for the plan. The DSP serves to guide growth, design, and development standards in Downtown Laguna Beach and has been amended throughout the years, including a comprehensive amendment in 2000, which expanded the Plan boundary to include the Boys and Girls Club on Laguna Canyon Road and created the Civic Arts District.

A second comprehensive update to the Specific Plan was initiated in 2014. On July 21, 2020, the Laguna Beach City Council adopted Ordinance No. 1648, Resolution No. 20.053, and a Negative Declaration, completing the local adoption process for the Phase I Update, which focused on streamlining the business permitting process and establishing new parking standards for non-residential uses.

The following summarizes key amendments made with the Phase I Update:

1. Simplify parking requirements for certain non-residential uses, such as office, retail, and food service in the Downtown to require three (3) spaces for each 1,000 square feet of gross floor area as opposed to the use-specific standards provided in the Municipal Code.
2. Allow more non-residential uses in the Downtown by right rather than require a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) in order to streamline and reduce barriers to new business.
3. Allow the City to change the "Allowed Uses and Permit Requirements Table" by City Council resolution on an as needed bases rather than through a Local Coastal Program (LCP) amendment.
4. Allow Artists' Work/Live units in the CBD-1 Resident Serving and CBD-2 Downtown Commercial Land Use Districts.
5. Rename the Civic Art District to the Arts District and adjust the district boundary.
6. Amend Title 25, Sections 25.16.050 and 25.40.010 to match the changes being made to the DSP.
7. Update of the design guidelines for private property development and include additional recommendations for public right-of-way improvements in the Downtown.
8. Reorganize and update the existing specific plan.

On February 15, 2022, the Laguna Beach City Council adopted LCP Amendment 19-4482 and Zoning Ordinance Amendment 19-4483, accepting the California Coastal Commission's suggested modifications. A summary of the Commission's suggested modifications include:

1. Modified parking, circulation, and public transit policies to ensure public access is protected.
2. Retain existing language in the certified DSP to maintain protection of Coastal Bluffs, modify language to maintain consistency with the public access policies of the certified Land Use Plan (LUP), and clarify terms associated with blufftop pedestrian access easements in the Central Bluffs District.
3. Alter the boundary of the Arts District to include two parcels with an underlying Public/Institutional (P/I) land use designation to maintain consistency with the certified LUP map.
4. Clarify that Coastal Development Permits (CDPs) are subject to Chapter 25.07 and not Section 25.40.010, and that changes to any local land use permitting requirements (i.e., Conditional Use Permits, Administrative Use Permits, and Temporary Use Permits as identified in Table 5-1), not related to CDP requirements, require an LCP amendment, which may be considered administratively.
5. Add a new definition for Civic-Related Uses to clarify the types of uses that are applicable.
6. Modify language in the Central Bluffs District section to ensure public visual resources are protected.
7. Other minor modifications to provide clarification, internal consistency of the DSP with the certified LCP, general cleanup of typographical errors, and to remove any references to documents that are not part of the certified LCP, such as the Landscape and Scenic Highways Element.

The final adoption also included additional modifications to formula-based eating and drinking establishments as follows:

1. Require a CUP for formula-based eating and drinking establishments. Modify Table 5-1 (DSP Area Land Use Districts Permit Requirements) accordingly.

It is further noted that on January 24, 2023, the Laguna Beach City Council unanimously adopted the 6th Cycle Housing Element Update, following incorporation of revisions suggested by the State Housing and Community Development (HCD). On February 7, 2023, HCD certified the Housing Element. Housing Element Policy 5.2-4 states that the City will pursue Phase II of the DSP Update to address the following residential development initiatives:

> 5.2-4(a): Provide more permissive development standards for affordable housing. With adoption of Phase II of the DSP, include incentives such as

increased densities, increased height limits, higher lot coverage, lower parking requirements, allowances for off street parking, allowances for lot assemblage and, removal of upper-story residential use limitations to assist in the development of housing for lower income households, including extremely low income households and households with special needs, persons experiencing homelessness, farm workers, persons with disabilities, including developmental and elderly.

5.2-4(b): With adoption of Phase II for the DSP, designate additional locations for residential/mixed-use development.

As indicated above, Housing Element Policy 5.2-4 identifies specific land use tools that can help facilitate the creation of new housing units, with an emphasis on affordable units. The City's assigned share of the regional housing needs requires that it plan to facilitate production of 394 housing units through 2029, of which 277 would be affordable to extremely low- to moderate-income households. While the Housing Element identified sites outside the downtown to accommodate the assigned housing needs and the city is not responsible for building these units through city sponsored projects, it is required to address constraints to housing development that are within the City's control. This includes evaluating regulatory barriers through amendments to the City's zoning ordinance, which includes the DSP. It is anticipated that the DSP Phase II amendments would promote the production of all housing types in the downtown, including market rate housing.

Project Characteristics

The proposed project involves the Laguna Beach Downtown Specific Plan Phase II Update. In 2019, the City Council directed completion of a comprehensive update to the Downtown Specific Plan (DSP) in two phases. The Phase I Update, which was adopted in 2020 and implemented in 2022, included streamlining the business permitting process and establishing new parking standards for nonresidential uses. The Phase II Update, which focuses on the Specific Plan housing provisions, building height and parcel merger components of the DSP Update, described under the Project Characteristics section and Table 1, was bifurcated, to be addressed separately and in coordination with the Housing Element Update. The Housing Element Update was completed and certified by the California Department of Housing and Community Development in February 2023.

The DSP Phase I draft amendments initially included several housing-related provisions, including building height increases and parcel mergers. At its December 17, 2019, meeting, the City Council directed staff to defer the housing-related changes to the DSP Phase II Update, that would be processed in conjunction with an Environmental Impact Report (EIR). At its October 28, 2025, meeting, the City Council re-confirmed the scope of the Phase II Update. A detailed outline of potential DSP Phase II changes is provided in Table 1 which follows. The key proposed changes for the Phase II Update are summarized as follows:

Changes to height restrictions:

The existing human-scale patterns of development are a defining characteristic of the Downtown and significantly contribute to the walking experience. Today, buildings are restricted to 12-foot, single-story height in most areas of the Downtown, creating many non-conforming conditions. The original intent of this restriction was to preserve the existing building height diversity. The DSP Phase II update would ease these restrictions by allowing two- and three-story buildings in more areas of the Downtown. The goal is to maximize infill housing opportunities at those locations, where additional building height would maintain an appropriate scale and form. **Exhibits 1.4 and 1.5** which follow, compare existing building heights and the proposed building height increases.

Existing regulation: Most areas are restricted to a 12-foot height (one story), with an additional six feet allowed for roof structures, mechanical equipment, and other limited improvements.

Proposed regulation: variable maximum building heights (12, 24, or 36 feet), based on location. It is anticipated that most areas would be eligible for the 24-foot building height allowance. In addition to allowing for increased building heights, the Phase II Update would introduce a building height variation requirement. This requirement would require projects to vary their height when an addition or new structure would result in the same number of stories or roof height as an adjacent building on the same street.

Changes to maximum residential density:

Existing regulation: One unit per 2,000 square feet of lot area in the CBD-1, CBD2, and CBD-Office Districts, except for the following:

- Historically significant homes may add units at a density of one unit per 1,000 square feet.
- Residential units in the CBD-Office District where at least 50-percent of the units are committed to low-income, senior, and/or disabled housing may provide units at a density of one unit per 1,000 square feet.
- One unit per 1,000 square feet of lot area in the CBD Visitor Commercial District.
- One unit per 2,000 square feet of lot area in the CBD Multi-family District.

Proposed regulation:

- Density cap for two-story properties (residential on upper floor only or behind a commercial storefront on the ground floor in certain areas): 700 square feet of lot area per unit (62 dwelling units per acre).
- Density cap for three-story properties (residential on two upper floors or behind a commercial storefront on the ground floor in certain areas) and the Multiple-Family District: 500 square feet of lot area per unit (87 dwelling units per acre).

- Average unit size of 800 square feet maximum, in certain areas of the downtown.

Changes to lot merger regulations:

Existing regulation: Parcels shall not be merged for development purposes that exceed 5,000 square feet except for City-ownership projects and when Planned Integrated Development is proposed in the Central Bluffs District.

Proposed regulation: Allow lots to be merged for a combined area over 5,000 square feet on Broadway, in the Arts District, and in the CBD Office District for affordable housing projects and market-rate residential projects that provide on-site inclusionary housing, in accordance with the requirements of the Laguna Beach Municipal Code (LBMC), Section 25.96.070.

Changes to the Urban Design Guidelines:

Downtown projects subject to the Planning Commission's design review approval must be found to comply with the DSP Urban Design Guidelines. Several revisions are proposed:

- Amendments to ensure that upper-level additions are adequately addressed.
- Ensure the more generalized design review criteria established by Section 25.05.040 of the Municipal Code are reflected in the Urban Design Guidelines. These include guidelines related to view equity.
- New objective design standards. Certain types of housing development projects must be reviewed against objective design and development standards in accordance with State Law. A new set of objective design standards would be created to ensure that these projects are held to high architectural standards.

Changes to the allowed uses:

- Allow residential uses in the Arts District and Central Bluffs by right, without a CUP (currently disallowed).
- Allow artists/live units with a CUP in the Visitor Commercial and Multiple-Family Residential zones (currently disallowed).
- Restrict residential uses to above the ground floor or behind a commercial storefront on the ground floor in certain areas where pedestrian orientation and the quality of the shopping experience are primary goals.

Changes to parking requirements:

- Existing regulation: Single- and two-family dwellings require two covered spaces per dwelling unit, plus an additional space when the gross floor area of each residence is 3,600 or more square feet.

- Existing regulation: Multifamily dwellings: 1.5 spaces for every studio or one-bedroom unit; two spaces for every unit with two or more bedrooms and one additional guest space for four units and every four thereafter.
- Proposed regulation: 0.5 spaces per market-rate or affordable dwelling unit, which may be covered or uncovered.

Residential Yield Per Block Area

The City has reviewed residential development potential, based on a block-by-block consideration throughout the downtown area, and determined the greatest potential for three-story development to occur along Laguna Canyon Road and extending to the Village Entrance area. Maximum two-story development is dispersed throughout the heart of downtown, and a small area along Coast Highway would allow for single-story development only.

The Program EIR for this review under CEQA, is designed to allow future residential projects in the DSP area to tier from the EIR, up to a maximum of 450 new residential units. The unit range analyzed (450 to 675 units) reflects the understanding that market conditions and individual property owner interest will influence where residential development occurs, and that some planning areas may experience greater demand for residential construction than others.

For purposes of the EIR analysis, a residential unit range has been established and allocated across the planning areas, as shown in **Exhibit 1.6, Residential Yield**. The areas with greater potential residential unit yields, based on land area and the proposed density standards, were assigned greater shares than areas that could accommodate fewer units. The upper bound of 675 units is solely an analytical assumption used for modeling purposes. The Program EIR will establish a firm cap of 450 units, and the City will be responsible for monitoring to ensure that the total number of approved residential units is tracked and does not exceed this limit without additional environmental review.

Goals and Objectives.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15124(b) states that an EIR Project Description must include "{a} statement of objectives sought by the proposed project. The statement of objectives should include the underlying purpose of the Project." The following are the proposed project objectives:

1. Provide sufficient housing opportunities that expand and diversify the City's housing stock, with an emphasis on rental housing, including both market-rate and affordable units.
2. Integrate new housing in a manner that perpetuates the Downtown character, which reflects high-quality urban design and a pedestrian-oriented, walkable environment.
3. Promote economic vitality by locating new housing within close walking distance of Downtown shops and services, while ensuring that residential development does not hinder commercial activity.
4. Pursue opportunities to provide affordable housing for seniors, students, artists, and disabled and/or low-income individuals.
5. Continue to provide incentives such as reduced fees, density bonuses, modified development standards, developer assistance with federal and other funding applications, and in-lieu housing fund contributions for the development of affordable housing that offers long-term affordability to extremely low, very-low-, low- or moderate-income households and persons.
6. Encourage the preservation and development of residential uses in existing buildings located above the ground floor, including artists work/live units, as allowed in various districts throughout the downtown.
7. Encourage new mixed-use developments allowing for residential uses on upper floors or behind commercial storefronts on the ground floor.

Phasing

In accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15165, which refers to Project phasing, individual development projects within the DSP would occur in incremental phases over time, based largely on economic factors, market demand, and other planning considerations. The exact details of each project would be evaluated by the city on a case-by-case basis.

Required Approvals

The City of Laguna Beach has primary approval responsibility for the proposed DSP Phase II Update and therefore serves as the Lead Agency for the Program EIR pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15050. The Laguna Beach Planning Commission will review and evaluate the Program EIR and the proposed DSP

Phase II Update and will make a recommendation to the City Council regarding adoption of the DSP Phase II Update and certification of the Program EIR.

The DSP Phase II Update includes adoption of a zoning ordinance amendment, amending the Downtown Specific Plan within Title 25 (Zoning) of the Laguna Beach Municipal Code, as well as adoption of the Program EIR. Because the Downtown Specific Plan and Title 25 of the Laguna Beach Municipal Code are components of the City's certified Local Coastal Program (LCP), approval and implementation of the DSP Phase II Update also require approval and certification of a LCP Amendment by the California Coastal Commission.

Program EIR

The environmental review will be in accordance with Section 15168 of the CEQA Guidelines, which is the provisions for a Program EIR. The Program EIR is to serve as the primary CEQA clearance for individual projects, pursuant to the project description. The Program EIR is a tool for CEQA-streamlining and carries with it a beneficial shelf life, beginning with the Program EIR certification, and throughout implementation within the Downtown area. Once the Specific Plan Program EIR is certified and in place, subsequent entitlement can tier from the findings of the Program EIR, in accordance with Section 15152 of the CEQA Guidelines.

Issues to be Addressed in the EIR

The City will perform a comprehensive evaluation of the potential impacts of this project in accordance with CEQA Guidelines and, more specifically, Appendix G, in order to determine if the proposed project would have potentially significant impacts. Appendix G identifies and addresses 20 topical areas for consideration of impacts for a project. The EIR will assess and disclose the reasonably foreseeable direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts that would likely result from the construction and operation of the proposed project. The EIR will identify mitigation measures if necessary to avoid, minimize, and offset potentially significant impacts of the project. The EIR will also describe the alternatives screening analysis conducted for the proposed project and evaluate alternatives to the proposed project that would avoid, minimize, and offset potentially significant impacts of the project while attempting to meet the objectives of the proposed project.

Based on the project description and the Lead Agency's understanding of the environmental issues associated with the project, the following topics are briefly discussed below and will be analyzed as standalone sections in the EIR:

- Aesthetics
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources

- Energy
- Geology and Soils
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use and Planning
- Noise
- Population and Housing
- Public Services
- Recreation
- Transportation
- Tribal Cultural Resources
- Utilities and Service Systems
- Wildfire

This list omits the CEQA Appendix G Checklist sections regarding Agriculture and Forestry Resources and Mineral Resources. These topics are not discussed in standalone sections within the EIR because the environmental factors associated with these topical sections are not applicable to the project and would not result in impacts. Nonetheless, these topics are briefly discussed below and will be briefly analyzed within the Effects Found Not To Be Significant section of the EIR:

Aesthetics

The Aesthetics review will consider sensitive uses that are in proximity to the project area. The study of impacts will thoroughly address existing conditions, identify demolition and construction-related impacts, review and consider designated scenic vistas that may occur in the vicinity, nearby view vantage points, analyze character and quality considerations, and study potential light and glare impacts.

Agriculture and Forestry Resources

Based on a project area reconnaissance and review of aerial photography, no agricultural uses or forestry resources exist on-site. The review has been further verified through additional research involving the City's policy documents, the National Resources Conservation Services Soil Survey, the California Department of Conservation Farmland Monitoring and Mapping program, and Williamson Act Maps. The conclusion of no potential impacts will be discussed within the Effects Found Not To Be Significant section of the EIR.

Air Quality

The findings of an Air Quality Evaluation will be summarized and incorporated into the EIR. The analysis will present the existing conditions and regulatory framework. Construction and long-term emissions will be studied.

Biological Resources

The findings of a Biological Resources Assessment will be summarized and incorporated into the EIR. The analysis will: 1) describe the methodology used to conduct the biological assessment; 2) provide a general description of the existing vegetation and associated wildlife resources within the project area; 3) identify potential impacts from project development; and 4) recommend mitigation measures to reduce potential impacts to less than significant levels.

Cultural Resources and Tribal Cultural Resources

The findings of a Cultural Resources Assessment will be summarized and incorporated into the EIR. The Cultural Resources Assessment will include an analysis of cultural, historic, and tribal cultural resources. The research, field surveys, historical evaluations, and tribal correspondence will be compiled and described. The EIR will include resource information, associated regulations, and a discussion of the project's cultural and tribal cultural settings. If potential significant impacts to resources are identified, mitigation measures will be incorporated to address those impacts.

Energy

An energy analysis technical review will be provided in the EIR. The energy analysis technical review will analyze the energy consumption implications of the project pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21100(b)(3) and CEQA Guidelines Appendix F.

Geology and Soils

Based on available references provided by the City, the geology and soils analysis will include a review of existing regional and local geology and soils constraints (such as compressible soils, landslide hazards, disruptions, displacements, compaction or over-covering of soil, and areas subject to subsidence) and overall seismic hazards. The evaluation will include the potential to directly or indirectly cause substantial adverse effects involving fault rupture, strong seismic ground shaking, and seismic-related ground failure (i.e., liquefaction). The analysis will address existing conditions and impacts caused by the project and, as necessary, recommend mitigation measures to reduce or avoid any significant impacts resulting from the construction and buildout of the project.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

The findings of a Greenhouse Gas Emissions Report will be summarized and incorporated into the EIR.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials

The analysis within the EIR will summarize information provided in regulatory agency databases, confirming current and past hazardous conditions. The

analysis will address existing conditions and impacts, with recommended mitigation measures, as necessary, to reduce or avoid any significant impacts resulting from the construction and buildout of the project.

Hydrology and Water Quality

The analysis will include a review of existing regional and local hydrologic, drainage, and water quality conditions. The local setting, topography, climate, surface waters, watershed, regional streams, and water bodies will be identified. Existing and proposed hydrology/drainage and water quality conditions will be addressed for the project. Portions of the project area are located within a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) designated Special Flood Hazard Area, including areas mapped within the floodplain and floodway; therefore, the analysis will also evaluate existing flood hazards and potential changes to flooding conditions. Based on available technical information, including a Hydrology Study and Water Quality Assessment, the analysis will consider the potential for changes in absorption rates, drainage patterns, storm drain improvements, and downstream effects associated with the project. The potential for the project to degrade water quality, interfere with groundwater recharge, or expose people to water-related hazards will be identified. The analysis will recommend mitigation measures, as necessary, to reduce or avoid any significant impacts resulting from the construction and buildout of the project.

Land Use and Planning

The analysis will include a review of surrounding land uses and evaluate the project against applicable City planning policies and standards. Specifically, the analysis will evaluate whether the project would cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating environmental effects. The review will also include regional policy considerations, including consistency with the Southern California Association of Governments Regional Comprehensive Plan and Guide policies.

Mineral Resources

Based on a site reconnaissance, review of aerial photography, and established thresholds, there are no known mineral resource conditions on-site. Thus, the project would not result in the loss of availability of known resources or an important mineral recovery site. The conclusion of no potential impacts will be discussed within the Effects Found Not To Be Significant section of the EIR.

Noise

The findings of a Noise Technical Report will be summarized and incorporated into the EIR. The analysis will consider potential mitigation, as necessary, to reduce construction and operation impacts. If construction and/or buildout noise emissions exceed the City’s thresholds of significance, coordination with the

City will be conducted to determine feasible mitigation measures. The results will be summarized in the EIR and include summaries of noise terminology, applicable noise regulations, ambient noise environment, and increases in existing noise levels.

Population and Housing

The analysis will be based in part on CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2(d), Growth Inducement. The analysis will be based on data from the City, County of Orange, the California Department of Finance, and the U.S. Census. The analysis will discuss mechanisms in which the project could foster economic or population growth, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment.

Potential growth-inducing impacts from the project will be analyzed as they relate to population, housing, and employment factors. The analysis will address growth-inducing impacts in terms of whether the project influences the rate, location, and amount of growth. Growth-inducing impacts will be assessed based on the project's consistency with adopted/proposed plans that have addressed growth management from a local and regional standpoint.

Public Services and Recreation

The analysis will include information from public service providers to confirm relevant existing conditions and potential project impacts. The analysis will focus on potential alterations of existing facilities, extension or expansion of new facilities, and any possible increase in demand for services. The analysis will include potential impacts for proposed/required new or physically altered government facilities, including fire protection, police protection, schools, parks, recreational, and other facilities. The analysis will address existing conditions and impacts caused by the project and recommend measures, as necessary, to reduce or avoid any significant impacts resulting from the construction and buildout of the project.

Transportation

The EIR will include a VMT analysis as well as a study of transportation systems within the project area and local vicinity. Potential impacts will be identified and mitigation measures will be identified, as necessary, to reduce the significance of impacts.

Utilities and Service Systems

The analysis will include information from applicable service providers to confirm relevant existing conditions and potential effects. The analysis will address both wet (water, sewer, and stormwater) and dry (electricity, natural gas, and telecommunication) utility infrastructure. The discussion will include on- and off-site utility line upgrades, existing capacities, and availability of supply to meet demand. The analysis will also address whether the project would have sufficient

water supplies available from existing entitlements and resources, and whether new or expanded facilities would be needed. Landfill capacity and compliance with solid waste regulations will be addressed.

Wildfire

The analysis will present the existing conditions, regulatory framework, construction-related impacts, wildfire risk, and evacuation routes and capabilities within the project area. The analysis will recommend mitigation measures, as necessary, to reduce or avoid any significant impacts resulting from the construction and buildout of the project.

Project Alternatives

Project alternatives will be studied to avoid and/or substantially reduce impacts. Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6, the range of Alternatives may include the "No Project", a "Reduced Density Alternative", and one other alternative.

Additional CEQA Sections

The analysis for additional EIR sections will be included to meet CEQA and City requirements, including the following: Significant Irreversible Environmental Changes; Effects Found Not To Be Significant; Inventory of Unavoidable Adverse Impacts; Organizations and Persons Consulted and Preparers of the EIR.

Responsible and Trustee Agencies

In accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15082, this NOP will be sent to the Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation (formerly the Governor's Office of Planning and Research), Responsible Agencies, Trustee Agencies, and other interested parties. The City encourages Responsible Agencies, Trustee Agencies, and other interested parties to provide input regarding the scope and content of the environmental information relevant to their statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project. Responsible Agencies, Trustee Agencies, and other interested parties should utilize the EIR if the entity will consider a permit and/or other approval for the proposed project.

Scoping Meeting

Pursuant to California Public Resources Code Section 21083.9 and California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3, CEQA Guidelines Section 15082, the City as the Lead Agency for the project, will conduct a Scoping Meeting for the purpose of soliciting oral and written comments from interested parties requesting notice, responsible agencies, agencies with jurisdiction by law, trustee agencies, and involved federal agencies, as to the appropriate scope and content of the Draft EIR. The Scoping Meeting will involve a presentation about the proposed project and the environmental review process and schedule. The Scoping Meeting is for

information-gathering and is not a public hearing. No decisions about the project will be made at the Scoping Meeting. A separate public hearing will be scheduled after the completion of the Draft EIR.

One scoping meeting will be held to receive comments on the proposed scope and content of the Downtown Specific Plan Phase II Update Draft EIR. You are invited to attend and present environmental information that you believe should be addressed in the Draft EIR. The meeting will be scheduled for:

Date: Wednesday, February 4, 2026
Time: 6:00 p.m.
Location: Laguna Beach Council Chambers
505 Forest Avenue
Laguna Beach, CA 92651

The City will consider all written comments regarding the potential environmental effects of the project received during the NOP public review period. These comments will be reviewed and considered by the City as part of the environmental analysis of the proposed project and will become a part of the public record for the Draft EIR.

The City encourages all interested individuals and organizations to attend the meeting. Questions may be asked verbally during the Question-and-Answer session. Please note, participation in the scoping meeting is available in person only. The City plans to broadcast and record the meeting via Granicus, YouTube, and Cox Cable Channel 852. These broadcast mediums are provided as a courtesy only and are not guaranteed to be technically feasible or uninterrupted.

Interested parties intending to provide comments or public testimony in response to the NOP are strongly encouraged to submit written comments, as outlined under "Submittal of Written Comments," below.

Accommodations

As a covered entity under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the City does not discriminate on the basis of protected classes and conditions.

If you require accommodations to participate in the scoping meeting, please submit your request at least three working days (72 hours) prior to the meeting by contacting Kate Kazama by phone at (949) 497-0748 or by email at kkazama@lagunabeachcity.net.

Review and Response Period

In accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15082, this NOP is being circulated for a minimum of 30 days for public review. The public review period for the NOP will **begin Tuesday, January 27, 2026**, and **end Wednesday, February 25, 2026**. Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15082(b), responses to this NOP must be

provided during the public review period. **The City requests that written comments be submitted as early as possible, and no later than 5:30 p.m. on Wednesday, February 25, 2026.**

Upon completion, the EIR document will be available for public review at the City of Laguna Beach, Community Development Department, Planning Division, 505 Forest Avenue, Laguna Beach, CA 92651, or on the City of Laguna Beach website at:https://www.lagunabeachcity.net/government/departments/community-development/planning/current-projects/housing-initiatives-1290.

Submittal of Written Comments

Please indicate a contact person for your agency or organization and send written comments (including first and last name, email address, telephone number, and/or other contact information) electronically or by mail to the following:

City of Laguna Beach
Community Development Department
Planning Division
ATTN: Kate Kazama, Associate Planner
RE: Laguna Beach Downtown Specific Plan Phase II Update
505 Forest Avenue
Laguna Beach, CA 92651
Email: kkazama@lagunabeachcity.net

ALL INTERESTED PARTIES ARE INVITED TO ATTEND THE PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING TO ASSIST IN IDENTIFYING ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED IN THE EIR. ATTENDEES WILL HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO PROVIDE INPUT TO THE CONSULTANTS PREPARING THE EIR.

Kate Kazama 1/23/2026

Kate Kazama, Associate Planner Date
Community Development Department

Source: Google Earth Pro, December 2025

CSG CONSULTANTS

NOT TO SCALE

12/2025

LAGUNA BEACH DOWNTOWN SPECIFIC PLAN
PHASE II EIR

Regional Vicinity

Exhibit 1.1

Source: Google Earth Pro, December 2025

CSG CONSULTANTS

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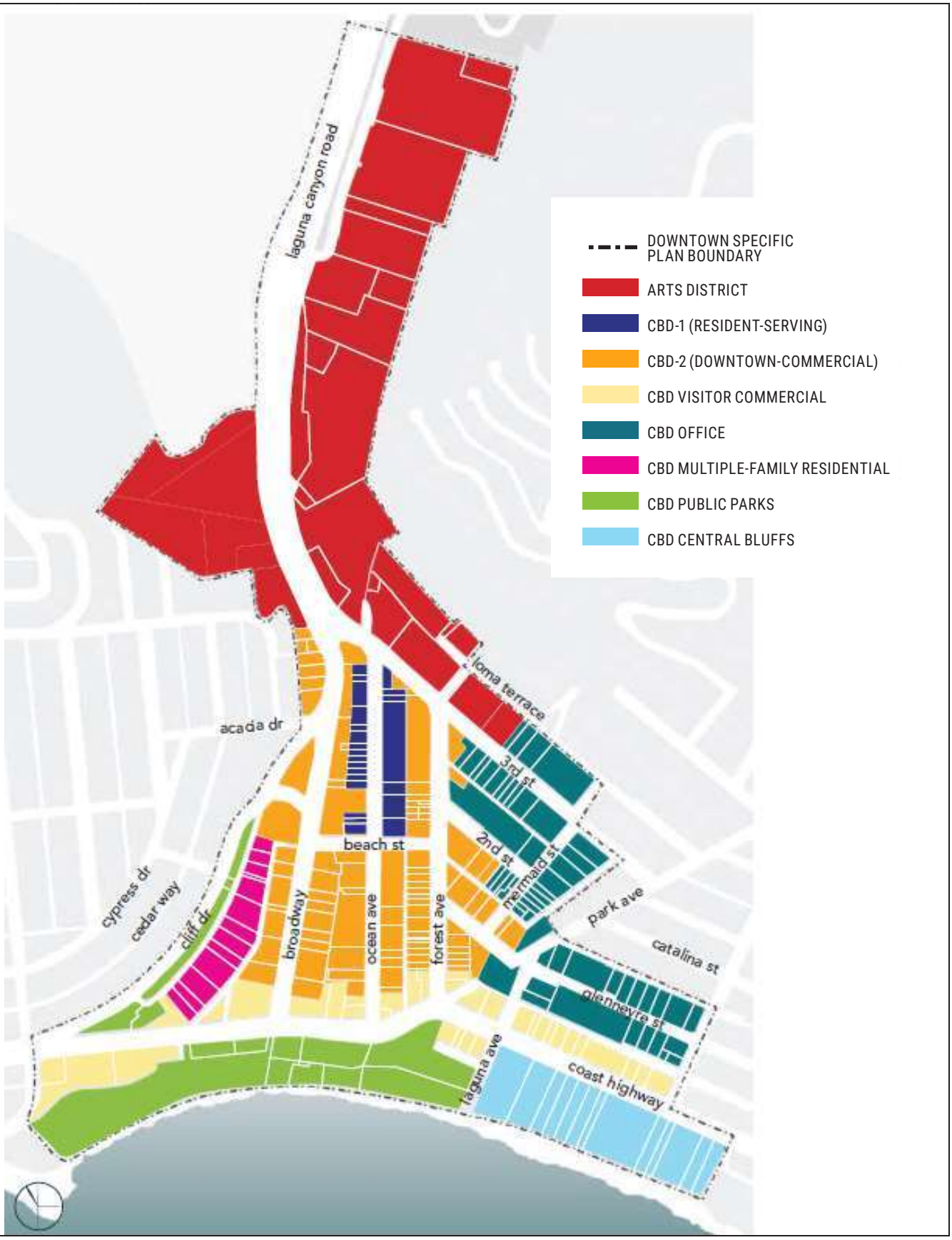
LAGUNA BEACH DOWNTOWN SPECIFIC PLAN
PHASE II EIR

Site Vicinity

Exhibit 1.2



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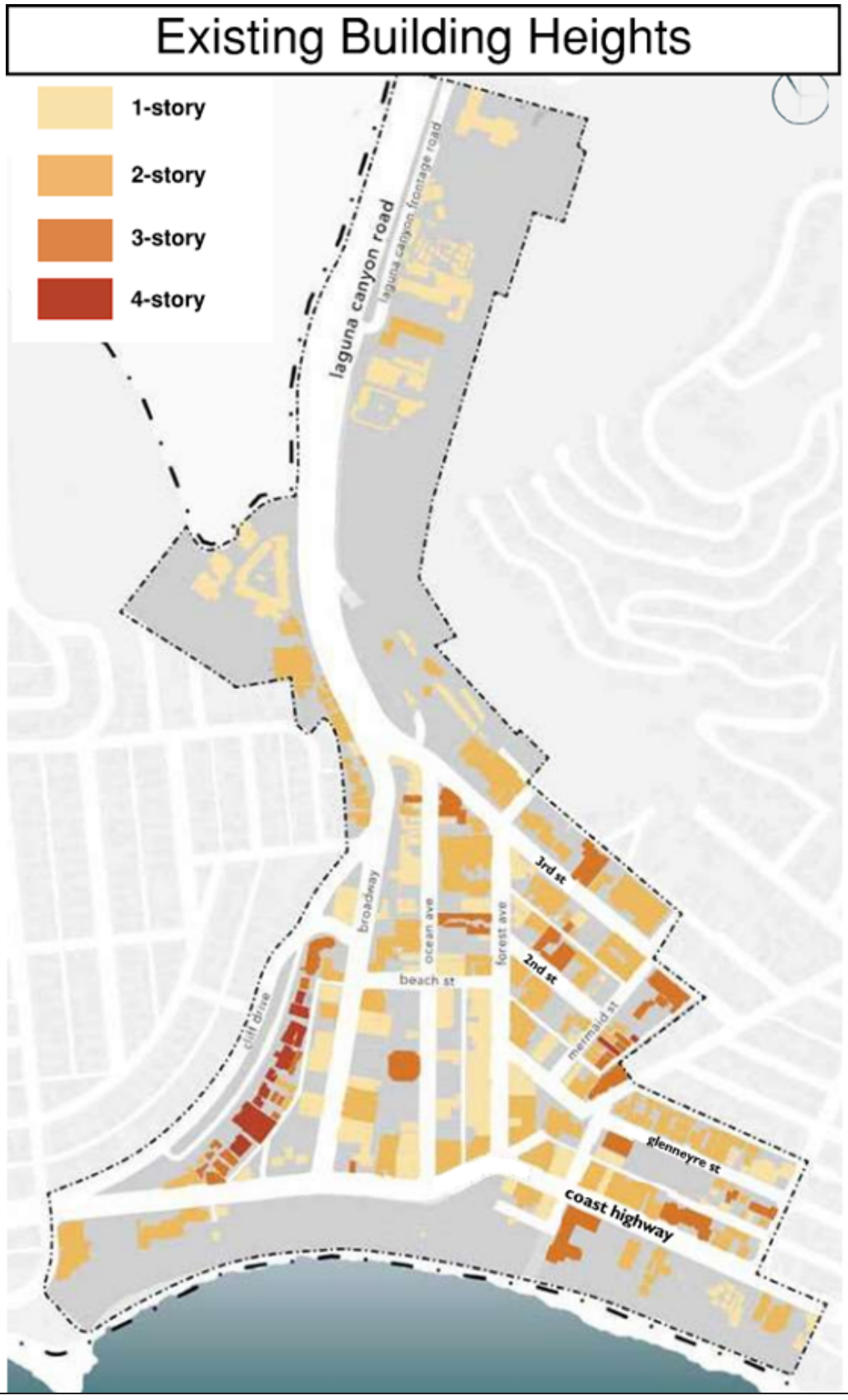
LAGUNA BEACH DOWNTOWN SPECIFIC PLAN
PHASE II EIR

Land Use Districts

Exhibit 1.3



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LAGUNA BEACH DOWNTOWN SPECIFIC PLAN
PHASE II EIR

Existing Building Heights

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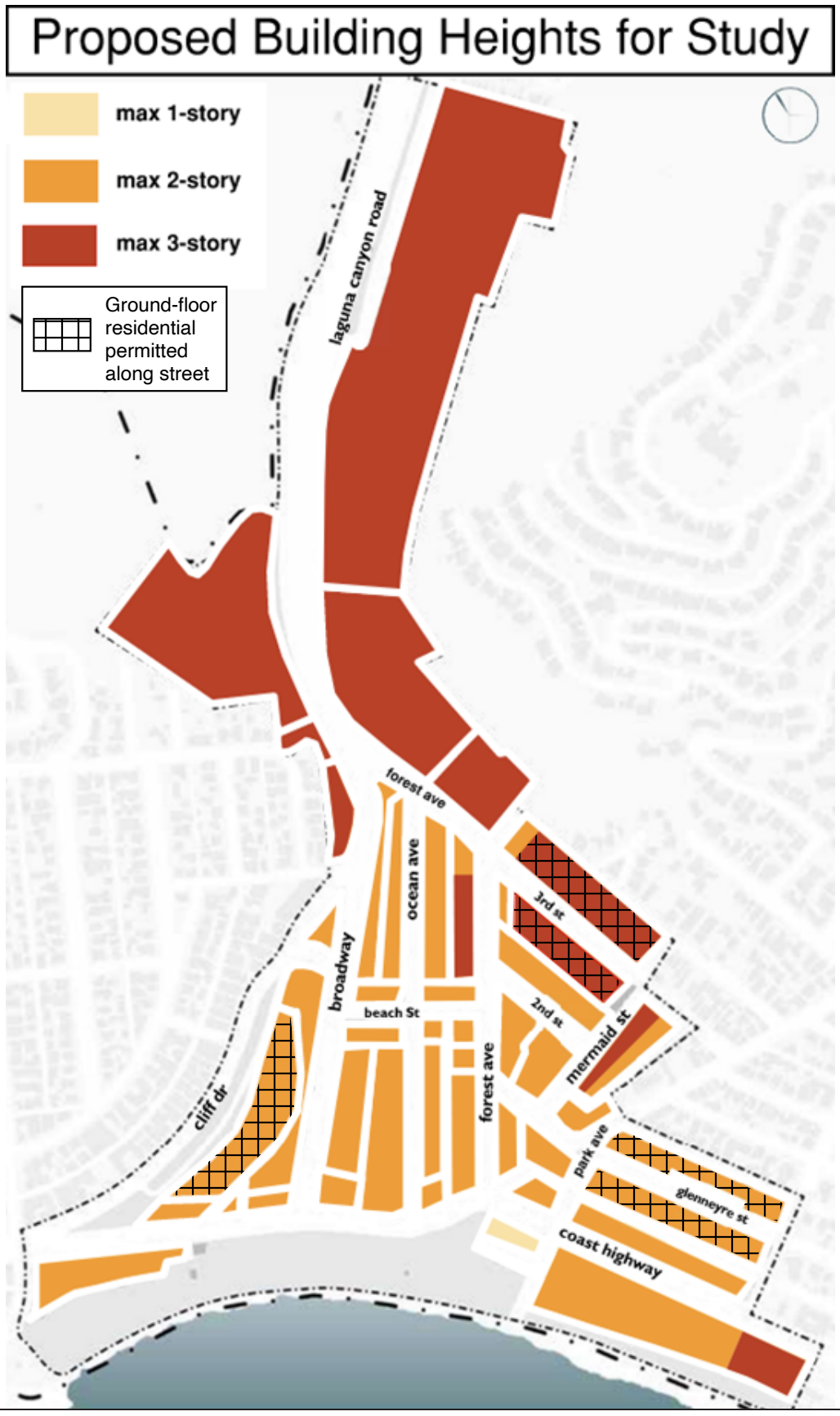
Exhibit 1.4



LAGUNA BEACH DOWNTOWN SPECIFIC PLAN
PHASE II EIR

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Proposed Building Heights

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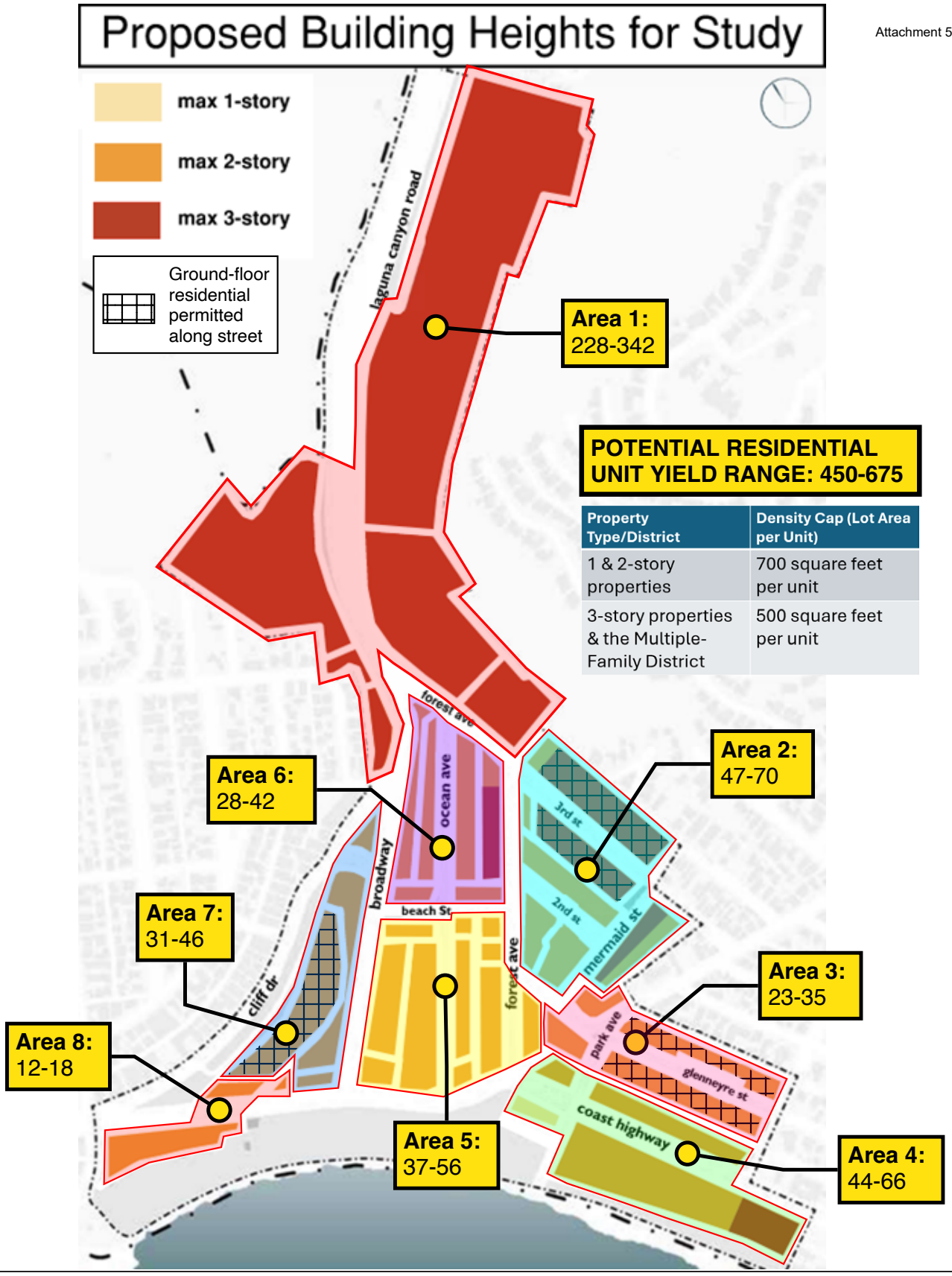
Exhibit 1.5

Attachment 5



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LAGUNA BEACH DOWNTOWN SPECIFIC PLAN
PHASE II EIR

Residential Yield

Exhibit 1.6